

## Message Text

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ACTION DLOS-04

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 FEA-01 ACDA-07 AGR-05 AID-05

CEA-01 CEQ-01 CG-00 CIAE-00 CIEP-01 COME-00 DODE-00

DOT-00 EB-07 EPA-01 ERDA-05 FMC-01 TRSE-00 H-02

INR-07 INT-05 IO-13 JUSE-00 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

NSF-01 OES-06 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-04 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SAL-01 /125 W

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P 081142Z MAY 76

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0738

INFO USMISSION USUN PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 13589

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PLOS

SUBJECT: LOS - COMMITTEE I: SEABED QUOTAS

REF: STATE 103117

1. I RAISED ISSUE OF PROPOSED FRENCH SEABED MINING SITE LIMITATION WITH FONMIN SAUVAGNARGUES MAY 5. IN STRESS-ING NEED FOR SPEEDY CONCLUSION OF LOS NEGOTIATIONS, I NOTED THAT US HAS ALREADY ENACTED 200-MILE RESOURCE ZONE, AND CONGRESS IS WAITING TO PASS BILL WHICH WOULD GIVE US COMPANIES UNILATERAL SEABED MINING RIGHTS. AMERICAN COMPANIES ARE READY TO MAKE INVESTMENTS WHICH COULD IN TIME PRODUCE NEW, BADLY NEEDED, MINERAL SUPPLIES WHICH WILL BE OF BENEFIT TO ALL NATIONS, INDUSTRIALIZED OR LDC. US, FOR EXAMPLE, HAS ALMOST EXHAUSTED HIGH GRADE IRON ORES, AND HAS NO NICKEL OR COBALT. BEST WAY TO BRING FORTH THESE NEW SUPPLIES WILL BE THROUGH UNRES-TRICTED ACCESS AND OPEN COMPETITION. NOT ALL COMPANIES  
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WILL BE SUCCESSFUL. US FEELS THAT FRENCH PROPOSAL FOR

ARBITRARY LIMITATIONS ON ACCESS IS NOT NECESSARY TO PROTECT FRENCH INTERESTS, AS ADEQUATE NUMBER OF POTENTIAL MINING SITES EXIST FOR ALL. US HAS PROPOSED TWO-ALTERNATIVE SITE SYSTEM WHICH SHOULD HELP MEET FRENCH CONCERNS; POLITICALLY, WE HAD GONE ABOUT AS FAR AS WE COULD GO. I STRESSED THAT USG AND GOF HAVE COMMON INTEREST IN REACHING LOS AGREEMENT WHICH WOULD AVOID CHAOS IN SEABED RIGHTS, AND HOPED THAT FRENCH DELEGATION COULD BE GIVEN MORE FLEXIBLE INSTRUCTIONS SO AS TO REMOVE THIS OBSTACLE.

2. SAUVAGNARGUES LISTENED ATTENTIVELY AND SEEMED RECEPTIVE TO OUR POSITION, WHICH HE ASKED TO HAVE PRESENTED IN AIDE MEMOIRE FOR CAREFUL STUDY. HE COMMENTED THAT GOF BELIEVES THAT UNILATERAL ACTIONS BY STATES (SUCH AS NEW US LEGISLATION) SHOULD NOT NECESSARILY BE DAMAGING.

IF THEY ARE TAKEN WITHOUT PREJUDICE TO POSSIBLE LOS CONVENTION. HE SUGGESTED THAT CERTAIN QUESTIONS HAD TO BE SOLVED URGENTLY -- FISHING, NAVIGATION IN STRAITS, RESOURCE AND SHELF RIGHTS -- BUT THAT SEABED QUESTIONS SEEMED EXCESSIVELY THEORETICAL. COULD THEY NOT BE SEPARATED OUT AND SETTLED AT A LATER STAGE? ON ACCESS TO SEABED MINING SITES, SAUVAGNARGUES SAID, HE WAS NOT ABLE TO DISCUSS THE ISSUE IN DETAIL. BUT US POSITION ON FREE ACCESS TO MINING SITES SEEMS IN GOF EYES TO MEAN THAT LDCS WOULD WIND UP WITH 50 PERCENT OF THE SITES (ON WHICH THEY COULD DO NOTHING), WHILE US COMPANIES WOULD ACTUALLY EXPLOIT OTHER 50 PERCENT.

3. IN ASKING US TO SEND AIDE MEMOIRE ON US POSITION, SAUVAGNARGUES SAID HE WOULD HAVE ISSUE REVIEWED WITH MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY TO SEE IF FRENCH AND US POSITIONS COULD BE NARROWED.

4. SAUVAGNARGUES ALSO COMMENTED ON OUR PROPOSAL TO RESUME LOS CONFERENCE IN JULY, INDICATING THAT GOF THOUGHT THIS TOO EARLY; MORE TIME WOULD BE NEEDED TO ABSORB LESSONS OF CURRENT SESSION AND PREPARE. I REPLIED THAT I WAS NOT PRESSING ON THAT POINT AT CONFIDENTIAL

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PRESENT.

5. COMMENT: I TOOK OUR CASE TO FONMIN OUT OF CONCERN THAT MININDUSTRY COULD HAVE TAKEN REFUGE IN EXCUSE THAT INSTRUCTIONS TO LOS DELEGATION ARE FOREIGN MINISTRY MATTER. I BELIEVE WE HAVE NOW MADE SAUVAGNARGUES APPRECIATE OUR CONCERNS ON THIS ISSUE; HIS PROMISE TO FOLLOW UP WITH MIN INDUSTRY IS AS MUCH AS WE COULD HAVE

EXPECTED AT THIS POINT. WE WILL ALSO SEND COPIES OF  
AIDE MEMOIRE TO MINISTER OF INDUSTRY'S OFFICE AND FOLLOW  
UP AS OCCASION PERMITS.  
RUSH

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## Message Attributes

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